

RALLY, COMRADES!

THE VOICE OF THE LEAGUE OF REVOLUTIONARIES FOR A NEW AMERICA

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Women's Homelessness is a Crisis of Civilization

Note from editors: In 1910, an international conference of socialist women declared March 8th as International Working Women's Day, in honor of the struggles of working-class women for equality and better lives. This idea grew after a Women's Day was organized in New York on February 28, 1909. Revolutionaries around the world began honoring March 8th, and after 1975 the United Nations began celebrating it as International Women's Day. The U.S. Congress has never approved proposals to recognize the day in the U.S., though since 1980 each president has issued a proclamation naming March as Women's History Month.

Today, women not only play leading roles in the fight for survival, they are fostering "the emergence of new ideas" through their study, teaching, and writing articles such as this one.

Homelessness among women is increasing in unimaginable ways. This is a crisis facing civilization and is not being spoken about. It is the great hidden story in the United States, a hidden story that is created and enforced by misogyny. Violence facing women who live in shelters or on the streets is near 100 percent. It includes the violence of mental illness, bad nutrition, police abuse, racism, and criminalization. The lack of mental health care, disease control, and hospital care are issues of life and death.

Among industrialized nations, the United States has the largest number of homeless women and children. Not since the Great Depression have so many families been without homes. The statistics cited below are the best estimates of the extent of homelessness, but it is important to note that they are undercounts.

The effects of rising rents, the poverty of single-parent families (80 percent led by women), the lack of civic action except to criminalize the unhoused, and the false and mean-spirited solution of "emergency shelters," have created a situation nationally where unhoused families comprise roughly 34 percent of the total U.S. unhoused population. One million six hundred thousand children will experience homelessness over the course of a year.

"The increase in individuals experiencing homelessness in Los Angeles County has disproportionately affected women. Since 2013, the number of women experiencing homelessness has increased by a staggering 55%. Furthermore, women comprise 61% of the overall homeless population increase since 2013. ... With over 60% of its population living in rental housing, Los Angeles is a city of renters. However, ... 58.5% of L.A. renters cannot afford their rents. ("2016 Downtown Women's Needs Assessment," 2016 DWNA).



Alameda County Courthouse. December 26, 2019. Moms4Housing at press conference with lawyer and supporters after eviction hearing where they argued that housing is a human right. Photo: Daniel Lee

VIOLENCE AND CRIMINALIZATION

Living in violence goes beyond a physical attack, such as when a woman lives in a van on the street and the police are trying to take her child. When a sex worker asks for help, police often treat her with violence. It's violence when the encampments on Skid Row are cleared by sanitation workers and the police.

"Just over one-third (33.6%) of women reported having a police interaction within the last year, and although half of women (51.4%) reported their interaction was to seek help from the police, 13.3% said they'd experienced an inappropriate or abusive interaction with an officer, such as excessive use of force or sexual harassment." (2016 DWNA)

The criminalization comes as soon as you're poor. Poverty is criminalization. The transgender woman who is violently attacked faces procedures that are so denigrating, with police who show no respect and doctors and nurses who don't care.

An active, revolutionary homeless woman interviewed by *Rally, Comrades!* said, "If the police put you in jail, you can't follow up. You lose your place for housing. With the Los Angeles City program 'Healthy, Clean Streets,' the police decide what you keep. They take your paperwork; they take part of your life away. This is criminalization. There's nothing that's been resolved. When women

are released from the hospital, where do they go? There are no quarters for us; we walk with heavy bags. There is no rest. There's no place to shower... everyone is throwing feces on the street. It is medieval times 2020. It could seem that we are free because we live outside, but when we see the police, it feels we are in prison".

DISCRIMINATION AND RESISTANCE

Racial demographics in 2016 continue to show African-American women are significantly overrepresented in the homeless population of downtown Los Angeles. Census data from 2014 shows 8.7% of women in Los Angeles County are African-American. Yet,

African-American women comprised 57.7% of 2016 Women's Needs Assessment survey respondents. Of those women, 32% reported that they sleep most regularly on the streets – a lower rate than that of Latina women (39.6%) but higher than that of white women (28.2%).

"Women over 60 aren't seen as productive. It's going to get worse. It's a reflection of the system. Women over fifty are the highest victims of predatory lending. It's everybody. Over half of the population on Skid Row is over 50. More than half of women age 50 and older do not sleep most frequently in permanent housing – 32% reported sleeping most frequently in shelters, and 28.1% most frequently sleeping on the street." (2016 DWNA)

There is resistance among the unhoused that every conscious and caring person must recognize and support immediately. It's the resistance of a population that has been abandoned and represents an army of the propertyless that has no connection with the ruling class society. As the interviewee said, "Where is the politics of resistance, of fighting back? We'd rather live on these streets than be included in a system that doesn't help anyone. No one wants to live on the street, but in the end, it's a way to resist."

"I have more support from the encampments than from the people who're paid to work with the unhoused," she continued. "We women didn't create this system, so, of course, this will affect us the worst. The only way to cure it, to take care of it, is to step up and take care of each other. Why do we need permission from the government? Do we ask the father? We need to seriously start our own connection, our own gathering. We need to create a space to start the discussion. Homelessness can be solved by community effort, by using our tax money. We know what is needed. It is less the logic of the mind (mindset) than the logic of the heart."

"When women leave their homes to escape a violent environment, they often have nowhere else to turn. Due to a lack of safe, affordable housing options, these women are often forced to choose between remaining with their abuser or becoming homeless." (2016 DWNA)

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We Cannot Stay Still

In the middle of an election year, Donald Trump has been impeached. And acquitted. The impeachment and trial constituted a battleground in which the ruling class fought it out over how, in a world of instability and polarization, to advance U.S. global economic and geopolitical power.

As the article "**China's Rise and the Historical Decline of the U.S.**" points out, the policies of the Trump administration are an expression of the process of polarization, not the cause. The world order that has been in place since the fall of the Soviet Union, a unipolar, hegemonic order dominated by the U.S., is now being challenged by the rise of a new, multipolar world order.

Underneath all of the posturing and rhetoric are the dark realities of a world economy in crisis. The ruling class today does not disagree about *what* must be done to preserve private property and maintain U.S. domination globally. However, they do not agree over *how* that should be accomplished.

As "**From the Editors: Impeachment and Our Fight**" indicates, Trump should be impeached. For that matter, the whole ruling class should be "impeached." They have proven that they are unfit to rule. Now, with the "green light" of acquittal, forces within the Trump administration see themselves in a position to shape and advance the merger of the State and the corporations: A fascist economy and society.

The global crisis and the failure of the ruling class to resolve it is graphically expressed in the "unnatural disasters" that afflict not only human beings but the survival of our plan-

et. The article "**Superbugs: Intersection of Technology, Healthcare and Ecology**" describes the development of how superbugs, harmful bacteria that are resistant to antibiotics, are part of a growing list of unnatural disasters that have been engendered by the failures of capitalism and the private property system.

But it doesn't have to be this way. Every effort by the ruling class to resolve the crisis in their favor only worsens the plight of the world proletariat, globally and here in the U.S. Out of necessity, the workers who have been discarded and victimized are forced to fight for the very right to life itself. Workers are beginning to break with their rulers and to wage a battle for the necessities of life: food, shelter, clean water, and a clean environment, education, healthcare.

The impeachment and trial of Trump is a battleground where the ruling class is fighting out how to clear the way to resolve the crisis in their favor. The elections of 2020 can also be viewed as a battleground. This time it is not only various representatives of the ruling class that is putting forward their solutions. The new class of workers is taking their fight for their basic needs into the electoral arena. The door is being opened to political revolution. But as the article "**Opening the Door to Political Revolution**" points out, political revolution is more than a slogan. It is a life and death political struggle to claw control of government away from the corporations, return their resources to the public, and establish a working-class democracy. This can be summed up as a cooperative economy, where

Inside **Rally, Comrades!**

housing, food, health care, and education are available to each according to their need and from each according to their ability.

From Skid Row in Los Angeles, the article "**Women's Homelessness is a Crisis of Civilization**" reports how homelessness among women is increasing in drastic ways. It rightfully understands that this is a crisis facing civilization, even while it remains the greatest hidden story in the U.S. In the words of one homeless mother: "When we talk about the unhoused, women are not valued when they lose their housing, their family. They are the most vulnerable. This is very deep; we cannot stay still. We cannot waste time; we need to rise for the sake of our daughters, our granddaughters."

"**Epochal Change Brings Forth New Leadership**" emphasizes the reality we are describing. America is a vast country, and its history shows that mass uprisings are key to the revolutionary process here. Political organizing has to be local to prepare for this inevitability, deeply imbedded in the grievances of the community, and giving rise to local leaders who are in touch with these aspirations and motion.

During these times of epochal change, new demands are put upon a new class equalized by poverty, oppression, and exploitation. And they are rising to the challenge. The door to revolution is being opened by individuals, local groups and organizations all across the country, as well as finding expression in the elections. The revolution is global, it is national, but in the first place, the revolution is local. **RC**

EDITORIAL POLICY

Rally: to bring back together and put in a state of order, as retreating troops [to return to attack]

Comrade: a person with whom one is allied in a struggle or cause

Rally, Comrades! is the political paper of the League of Revolutionaries for a New America. In this period of growing motion and developing polarization, *Rally, Comrades!* provides a strategic outlook for the revolutionaries by indicating and illuminating the line of march of the revolutionary process. It presents a pole of scientific clarity, examines and analyzes the real problems of the revolutionary movement, and draws political conclusions for the tasks of revolutionaries at each stage of development in order to prepare for future stages. It is a vehicle to reach out and communicate with revolutionaries both within the League and outside of the League, to engage them in debate and discussion, and to provide a forum for these discussions. Articles represent the position and policies of the League of Revolutionaries for a New America.

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League of Revolutionaries for a New America

Today, whether through words or deeds, vast numbers of socially conscious people declare themselves revolutionaries in opposition to the degenerating social and economic conditions. The League's mission is to unite these scattered revolutionaries on the basis of the demands of the new class, to educate and win them over to the cooperative, communist resolution of the problem.

The demands of this new impoverished class for food, housing, education, health care and an opportunity to contribute to society are summed up as the demand for a cooperative society. Such a society must be based on the public ownership of the socially necessary means of production and the distribution of the social product according to need.

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The *Rally, Comrades!* bilingual website provides online access to all issues of *Rally, Comrades!* It is a political resource for our readers, and provides up-to-date articles, statements and analysis of key questions of importance to revolutionaries.

Opening the Door to Political Revolution

The 2020 elections are offering voters their starkest choice in decades: Double down on the fascist future of misery and concentration camps promised by the Trump administration or, open the door to a political revolution capable of building a peaceful, prosperous, cooperative society.

Corporate political representatives in both parties are stepping up their attacks in order to stop this political revolution before it gets started. The outcome of the elections is becoming a life and death matter for millions of Americans. The significance of electoral campaigns like Bernie Sanders' and others is not just their New Deal-style programs, but the fact that they are emerging during a time of systemic breakdown. The New Deal used government spending to stabilize capitalism, but Sanders is promoting his program at a time when the economy is self-destructing.

As Andrew Yang pointed out, today's automation increasingly no longer needs human labor. Since capitalism by definition requires the buying and selling of labor power to exist, it can therefore no longer be saved by a New Deal, a Sanders program, or anything else. Revolutionaries fight for the Sanders campaign not just because it addresses our immediate demands, but because it opens up a sweeping debate about the entire corporate property system.

MOMS 4 HOUSING

As the system crumbles, the sharpening struggles of the economically displaced are pushing the property issue into electoral debates. In Oakland, California a group of recently dispossessed, working, homeless mothers took over a vacant home owned by the speculator, Wedgewood. They organized the group "Moms 4 Housing." This action to protect their children dramatically called into question a system that protects corporate property over the lives of human beings. The moms argued that their human right to housing surpasses the speculator's "right" to keep the home vacant. This idea resonated with a population and an electorate that are feeling at risk of displacement and homelessness themselves. Three hundred people turned out on January 13 to attempt to block their eviction.

Homelessness in Oakland has almost doubled in the past two years, and more than a hundred homeless encampments have sprouted up in almost every corner of the city. At the same time, Oakland has four empty residences for each homeless person and thousands of "market rate" housing units sit empty. This is typical of more cities across the country, so much so that the Trump administration announced that it plans to use law enforcement to round up homeless people and place them in government detention facilities.

The Oakland women represent the social force that points the way forward to the reconstruction of society – the new class of workers cast out by labor-replacing technology. The needs of this new class cannot and

will not be met within the existing system, because it no longer has decent jobs for people, but still requires them to have money to pay for what they need. This is the essence of the problem, but also points the way forward toward the solution: a society where wealth is distributed according to need, not money. Destitution is forcing people to move from talk to action to secure their right to housing and other necessities.

Why is this happening? Because the automation revolution has triggered permanent unemployment and a dramatic shift to part-time and temporary jobs that do not pay a living wage. A worker in Oakland would need to earn \$48.71 an hour to be able to afford the median monthly rent. At the same time, corporations are refusing to pay taxes to support workers they do not need, and state and federal housing programs have been cut to the bone.

HEDGE CITIES

The emergence of so-called "hedge cities" is intensifying the crisis. Hedge cities are a new form of private property and corporate control. The term was coined in a 2017 report by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing. With increasing automation, declining rates of manufacturing profit have diverted more and more capital into financial speculation. According to the Rapporteur, "Financialization of housing refers to structural changes in housing and financial markets and global investment, whereby housing is treated as a commodity, a means of accumulating wealth, and often as security for financial instruments that are traded and sold on global markets. It refers to the way capital investment in housing increasingly disconnects housing from its social function of providing a place to live in security and dignity, and hence undermines the realization of housing as a human right."

Hedge cities are those where speculators acquire such massive amounts of housing that they drive up the price of all the rest. A recent study by Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment (ACCE) and Strategic Actions for a Just Economy (SAJE), found that 41 percent of residential property in Los Angeles is owned by corporate entities, not individual human beings, and 103,000 housing units were unoccupied and vacant. *The Atlantic* reports that almost half of all luxury housing units built in New York City in the last five years are empty.

Although housing has always been a commodity under capitalism, hedge cities sharpen the debate over the viability and morality of private property. Do homes rightly belong to the millions of people who need them to survive, or to the handful of speculators who have no need for them except as investment vehicles for accumulating higher profits?

WOMEN TAKE ON CORPORATE PREDATORS

Moms 4 Housing did not stop in Oakland. On January 7, they impacted the housing nar-

Impeachment and Our Fight

From the Editors

Past impeachments show us that presidential impeachment is largely a struggle within the ruling class over the direction of the country, particularly in the economic sphere. In fact, the history of impeachments in America can be read as the political struggle among the ruling class to clear away impediments to the advance of U.S. global economic and geopolitical power.

Andrew Johnson was charged with violation of the Tenure of Office Act for firing Secretary of War Edwin Stanton. He was impeached for policies that undermined the victory of industrial and financial capital in the Civil War over slave capital by returning of the Southern planters to political power. Richard Nixon knew about the Watergate break-in. He was impeached for what came to be called the "Nixon shocks," which jeopardized the interests of international finance capital. Bill Clinton lied under oath about the affair with White House intern Monica Lewinsky. He was impeached for spearheading U.S. leadership of globalization and facilitating the domination of speculative capital. His impeachment was led by the "America First" crowd, who at that time based themselves in that sector of the economy facing an uncertain future under globalization and were able to skillfully manipulate the diffused spontaneous mass of discontent through their racist, fascist propaganda. This "America First" gang has reappeared once again under different circumstances and in a different form.

The impeachment the Democrats brought against Trump is an expression of the instability and polarization in the world situation, and is part of the capitalists' struggle to determine the means by which the world economy will advance. As in the past, the ruling class today is not in disagreement about *what* must be done – the preservation of private property and U.S. global hegemony. They are in bitter and dangerous disagreement over *how* it should be done. Underneath all the rhetoric and posturing is the darkening reality of a world economy in crisis, wrought by the electronic revolution. It is a crisis that is only being made worse by the economic and geopolitical policies of the "America First" Trump administration.

The problem for the Democratic Party is that it is in agreement with what Trump is attempting to achieve. These are the goals of the ruling class as a whole. They don't agree with how he is going about it. They stand in the well of the Senate and defend the Constitutional system that has facilitated and protected the capitalist system since the founding of America. But the Democrats have done little to make use of this system to ensure the well-being of the working class. In fact, their leadership attacks anyone who puts forward a program that seeks to address the real problems of the American people, especially within their own party.

Both parties are using the impeachment process to agitate and propagandize the working class to support their positions on impeachment and every other matter. The reality is that neither of these parties and the ruling class that they serve, have any answers for the real problems that we workers face.

Trump should be impeached. For that matter, the whole ruling class should be "impeached." They have proven they are unfit in their self-appointed capacity to rule over the rest of us.

They don't have the same morality and values as our class. When they talk about the rule of law, the Constitution, and freedom and liberty, they mean something very different. They mean laws that give them the freedom and the liberty to do whatever they want, regardless of the consequences for the rest of humanity.

Through the fight for the basic necessities of life, we can meet others in the same situation. We can band together around our common interests across the lines that the ruling class has created to divide us. We can form our own understanding of the possibilities based on what the new technologies make possible and begin to fight along the line to a peaceful and abundant future. **RC**

rative of the entire state by boldly disrupting a press conference by Democratic Party leaders promoting State Senate Bill 50. SB 50 is a pro-gentrification bill that threatens to displace even more millions of people from their homes. It would up-zone areas around transit routes, which are concentrated in the most low-income working-class neighborhoods. This will unleash the profiteers and speculators to make even more money than they already have. The alleged purpose is to address California's housing shortage, but California's

problem is not so much an absolute shortage as a problem of housing distribution. Most California cities routinely exceed their market-rate and luxury housing production goals but create only a fraction of the low-income housing needed to house the working class.

The SB 50 model claims to increase "affordable" housing by requiring market rate residential development to include an incremental amount of "inclusionary housing" units in each building or contribute to an af-

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Superbugs: The Intersection of Technology, Healthcare and Ecology

The technological revolution is more than smartphones, driverless vehicles, factory robots, and automated harvesters, just as the ecological crisis is more than climate change, pollution, and mass extinctions. The evolution and proliferation of superbugs, which are harmful bacteria that are resistant to antibiotics, illustrate the complex intersection of technology, healthcare, and the environment in the era of capitalism and private property.

As the revolutionary Frederick Engels said way back in 1876, “Let us not flatter ourselves overmuch on account of our human victories over nature. For each such victory, nature takes its revenge on us ... It brings about the results we expected, ...but it has unseen effects which only too often cancel the first.”

Drug-resistant infections are now the third leading cause of death in the United States, at 162,000 a year. A study by a British expert panel shows that if the trend continues, in 2050, they will kill 10 million people a year globally. The World Health Organization says we face a problem so severe, that it threatens the achievement of modern medicine.

HOW DID THIS PROBLEM DEVELOP?

Bacteria are the oldest and most numerous organisms on earth. In addition to about 30 trillion human cells, your body contains 39 trillion bacteria, most of which provide metabolic services that keep you alive. A few, about 100 species, can cause serious illnesses if they get into your blood.

Alexander Fleming accidentally discovered the naturally occurring antibiotic penicillin in 1928. Still, it was only during wartime in the early 1940s that its practical medicinal value was used to save injured soldiers. In the postwar period, the possibilities to fight infection in the civilian sector were realized. Soon following, in the 1950s, the first antibiotic resistance became a problem worldwide.

This set off a biochemical arms race: bacteria develop immunity to existing drugs, scientists develop new drugs, bacteria evolve again. This cycle continued for several decades, but after the 1980s, development slowed, and since 2000 very little has been done because the development of new antibiotics is not lucrative enough for Big Pharma.

Alexander Fleming did not patent penicillin; he rejected the idea of claiming ownership of a natural substance. So, the strategy for pharmaceutical profits was not to claim a monopoly but to promote high volume sales. Originally prescriptions were not required, and penicillin was not only dispensed to patients but put in ointments, toothpaste, throat lozenges, gum, and even lipstick.

Other antibiotics occurring in nature were developed, but these were patented to ensure profits. From 1948 through the next decade, over one hundred natural bacteria killers were found, most in tiny amounts in soil. Research and development was motivated not by health concerns but by how profitable they could become. New products with minimal changes were introduced to extend patent life and keep prices high.

Fully 64 percent of U.S. antibiotic sales by weight are sold for use in animals, as are the great majority worldwide. Much of this is excreted into the environment and piles up in “lagoons.” This negatively affects not only workers on farms and in slaughterhouses, but surrounding communities and in the end, all of us. The consequence is that resistant bacteria develop extremely quickly and become pervasive throughout the environment. This extensive use of antibiotics is not even shown to actually help meat production and safety.

BIG PHARMA GLOBALLY

Worldwide, Big Pharma is the world’s most profitable economic sector. The top 10 companies project \$373.4 billion in revenue in 2019 and have profit margins of 15-20%.

Despite their protestations of the expense of developing new drugs, they spend up to twice as much on marketing as they do on research and development. All of this is without regard to ethical standards. A study by Global Citizen found that between 1991 and 2015, U.S. pharmaceutical companies paid 35.7 billion dollars to settle state and federal charges, mainly relating to drug pricing fraud and unlawful promotion of drugs. Many were for repeat offenses, as fines for unethical practices became a “cost of doing business.”

We can see Purdue Pharma’s role in the opioid crisis as a current example when it heavily promoted Oxycontin and assured doctors it was not addictive. National Public Radio reported that Purdue was sued by over 2,000 local governments, and after striking a settlement for 3 billion dollars, it then declared bankruptcy. A *New York Times*’ report revealed in December, 2019, that as scrutiny of Purdue Pharma’s role in the opioid epidemic intensified over the past dozen years, its owners, members of the Sackler family, withdrew more than \$10 billion from the company and distributed it among their trusts and overseas holding companies!

The abuse of antibiotics has been more rampant, and the consequences more catastrophic in lesser developed countries. As historically documented by both UCSF and Oxfam, the material presented to physicians in lesser developed countries grossly exaggerated product effectiveness and minimized or omitted potential hazards. As a direct result of this intensive promotion by both multinationals and local manufacturers, over-prescribing and misuse of antibiotics are rife throughout the global South.

A 2018 OECD report stated that anti-microbial resistance (AMR) is projected to grow more rapidly in low and middle-income countries. In Indonesia, Brazil, and the Russian Federation, between 40 – 60 percent of infections are already resistant, compared to 17 percent in OECD countries. Poor sanitary and work-safety conditions, malnutrition, climate change, war, migration, among others, contribute to the worse conditions in the poorest countries, such as Afghanistan and Gaza (Palestine). But there are no national borders in what is called the “resistome,” no barriers that prevent or even slow the global spread of resistance genes.

The active pharmaceutical ingredients of the antibiotics prescribed in Europe and North America are usually manufactured in China and then made into pills or capsules in India, as well as Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Southeast Asia. Pharmaceutical companies have gone where wages are low, and regulation is weak. The supply chains are complicated and fuzzy for the public and regulators. Most production is by locally owned companies that compete to produce drugs for multinationals. One way for them to save money is to offload the cost of waste disposal into the environment. As Ian Angus wrote in his 2019 article “Superbugs in the Anthropocene” the effluent from a plant may flow into streams

and rivers, providing, “a giant Petri dish for anti-microbial resistance.”

WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN, WHAT COULD BE

One “free market” model proposed for solving the superbugs problem is to give incentives (bribes) to those very same pharmaceutical companies to get back into the business of developing more antibiotics that might be effective for a while. How can we possibly trust the very companies that have already made billions by overpromoting antibiotics and other drugs? It’s another self-serving solution such as bailouts for banks and General Motors, or hiding behind bankruptcy like Purdue Pharma and Pacific Gas and Electric are doing in the wake of the consequences of their gross irresponsibility.

This is just one of many “unnatural disasters” engendered by the failure of capitalism and private property to deal with climate change and other environmental conditions. Hurricanes and superstorms such as Katrina, Sandy, Harvey, and Maria; wildfires, polar vortexes, oil leaks from the Keystone pipeline, natural gas explosions, lead poisoning in Flint and Newark, contaminated water in the Appalachians - these and many more that frequently have the most severe effects on poor communities. But it doesn’t have to be this way.

“Those who hailed the first antibiotics as miracle drugs were not wrong,” writes Angus. “What those chemicals could have been was a way to work with nature, to use natural processes to overcome diseases that had plagued us for thousands of years. Used with appropriate humility and careful stewardship, in conjunction with a global drive to eradicate the conditions that cause infectious diseases, penicillin, and its successors could have been boons to humanity for centuries. But that would have required a radically different economy and society.”

The nationalization of the pharmaceutical industry for the benefit of the people is an idea that has been brought up in various forms and is an immediate solution to these problems. Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren have each proposed partial nationalization as have Physicians for a National Health Plan in the United States, and other forces in the U.K. The proposed Expanded and Improved Medicare for All system would stop gouging by Big Pharma by forcing negotiation for prices as well as eliminate the role of health insurance corporations.

A united push by the movements around healthcare and ecology would be a powerful force for pushing nationalization. Only by having real public control over essential services and production in health care, housing, education, to name a few, can we ensure the well-being of humanity. **RC**

Further Reading: Ian Angus, “Superbugs in the Anthropocene: A Profit-Driven Plague,” *Monthly Review*, Vol. 71(2). www.monthlyreview.org/2019/06/01/superbugs-in-the-anthropocene/ (Unless otherwise noted, the statistics in this article come from this Angus).

Women’s Homelessness...

(Continued from page 1)

SUPPORTING WOMEN LEADERS

Unhoused women are not valued when they lose their housing, their family. They are the most vulnerable. This is very deep; we cannot stay still. We cannot waste time; we need to rise for the sake of our daughters our granddaughters. Women must be able to choose where they want to live. When there are programs that provide families with housing, we’ll see hope.

The struggle against homelessness must take its directions from people who are being most affected by lack of housing. In the words of the interviewee, “No one understands this but the people who are experiencing lack of housing. The men have to support the women. It’s not time to tell us what to do. This wasn’t created by women. No programs will succeed with the presence of the police – don’t trust the police.”

This movement for survival, free from violence, and for a world where our wise women elders will live full and fruitful lives, will grow as we cultivate and recognize the emergence of new ideas. Such movements of resistance created by a rapidly changing society creates new leaders. These women are fully integrated into the battle and formulation of a revolutionary vision of society in the battle for the existence of encampments. They fight shoulder to shoulder with all who are fighting against oppression and poverty. **RC**

Epochal Change Brings Forth New Leadership

The country is seeing the beginnings of new revolutionary forces developing, especially in recent years.

Alamance County in North Carolina, with a long history of struggle dating back before the Revolutionary War, is once again a sign of the times. Groupings there are fighting against voter suppression, wage theft from undocumented workers, the ravages of opioids, and the invasion of luxury condo buildings. Various organizations are banding together to stop Alamance County from rejoining 287(g). This program allows state and local police to partner with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to identify and deport immigrants from their communities. These organizations are not only concerned about one injustice or another. Their bigger concern is that the working class unites to determine its own future.

The murder by police of 17-year-old Antwon Rose, Jr. on June 19, 2018, in Braddock, Pennsylvania, sparked ten demonstrations there across more than twenty square miles over several weeks.

Summer Lee, a community organizer, joined others who gathered where police killed Rose. Lee had organized her community around attacks by police on students in Woodland Hills, Pennsylvania. She helped a local parent run for the school board and lobbied to replace the Woodland Hills senior administrative staff. Lee decided to run as a Pennsylvania District 34 House candidate. "I just came to the realization that I can't lead someone some place where I'm not willing to go myself," Lee told Pittsburgh publication *The Incline* in December 2017. "So that's how I got into this campaign." Lee participated in the demonstrations following Rose's death, including blocking a highway exit. Lee has inspired others to become outspoken.

In 2011, Flint, Michigan, was placed under the Emergency Manager Law. In April of 2014, Flint's Emergency Manager switched the city's drinking water source from Detroit's Lake Huron to the highly polluted Flint River. Almost immediately, residents complained of foul-smelling yellow-brown water, rashes, and other maladies. They were met with dismissive arrogance at all levels of government. The residents of Flint, including doctors and researchers, brought attention to the lead poisoning of children. Between 6,000 and 12,000 children have been exposed to drinking water with high levels of lead and face serious health and developmental problems.

There was a tremendous outpouring of support from people all over the country as Flint parents and children spoke out about horrors inflicted on them. Hundreds of organizations descended on the city with their lists of demands for Flint residents. But it is the residents themselves, who daily experience the deterioration of children's intellectual capabilities, rashes, seizures, clumps of fallen hair, legionellosis, and other unexplainable illnesses, who are leading the protests and exposing the corruption underlying what happened.

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We can look at history for some understanding. Mississippi was a bastion of slavery before the Civil War, and, long after Reconstruction, lynchings, segregation, and disenfranchisement kept African Americans in a new form of slavery on the plantation. But after World War II, Black soldiers returning to Mississippi became the heart of the Civil Rights movement that brought change to Mississippi.

As John Dittmer, in his 1994 book *Local People: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Mississippi*, wrote: "The decade following World War II was one of intensifying black activism in Mississippi, beginning with modest voter registration efforts and culminating in an attack on the color line in the state's public schools. Although local people did obtain some assistance from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, the drive for political and educational equality was indigenous, receiving no support or encouragement from the federal government or from the labor movement, an ally of black activists in other southern states.

The World War II veterans and traditional black leaders were facing a seemingly impossible task in Mississippi, for despite the wartime upheavals, whites were determined to maintain their supremacy by denying blacks political, educational, and economic opportunity and by maintaining racial segregation in all walks of life."

Up until this time, most labor performed by Blacks was in tasks once performed under slavery, but change was coming. In late 1944, the Hopson Planting Company in Mississippi produced the first cotton crop totally without the use of hand labor. Machines planted the cotton, chopped it, and harvested the crop.

The new methods of growing and harvesting cotton were essential to the liberation

of Blacks from the chains of cotton production. New technology and methods, combined with the historical aspirations of the African American people and the courage of the Civil Rights fighters uniting people around the idea of attaining equality, produced progress in the cause of working people.

It is common to think that change is de-

termined only by the influence of individual leaders. Upon closer examination, it is clear that underlying processes are fundamental to changes in society. During epochal change, individuals, groups, and organizations come forward to effect the direction that change takes. Today the transformation of the economy from the era of industrial production with gigantic machinery to production based on microchips, robotics, and artificial intelligence requiring little or no human labor is upending everything.

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No one can stop the more efficient means of production from replacing the less efficient. As that happens, it becomes increasingly impossible to maintain the existing society. New thinking and new solutions are the order of the day. Today's changes in the economy are changing our class; it is equalizing poverty among those who are pushed out of a job al-

together or into contingent jobs. It puts new demands on our class.

The American ruling class has been very successful in fomenting racial violence, division, and hatred to prevent the working class from uniting around its common interests. The unity between the capitalist class and a section of the workers is coming to an end with the end of a jobs and wages-based economy. Millions of Americans are not making it, some living paycheck to paycheck, some with no real paycheck at all, no place to call home, no decent health care or education.

These millions are being forced into a fight simply to live. They are part of something new in America – a class that can only exist if goods produced with no labor are distributed according to need. Communism. It can only exist if the means to produce what people need is taken out of private hands, put into public hands, and used for the benefit of all. This class is the last, best hope for true economic and political democracy and is the engine for change.

The ruling class is turning to fascism through repressive laws locally and nationally, violence, and restriction of the ability of people to even protest. They also have hundreds of years of experience in controlling the leadership of the working class with money, vicious attacks on character, and deception. Going forward requires a firm grasp of the revolutionary process in America, a vision of what can be achieved, and developing our own leadership abilities.

The struggles of today express an underlying motion developing in America for an end to the destruction of communities and culture, to violations of voting rights, to treating those without homes as criminals, to callous disregard for the future of our young people. The end of these things requires envisioning a new kind of society, an understanding of how to bring it to fruition, and unwavering leaders who can bring that vision into every part of the country. **RC**

Join the League of Revolutionaries for a New America

The goal of all revolutionaries' work today is to give the American people a vision of what is possible. It is a vision of a world where no one has to fight another for the daily bread of existence. It is a vision where cooperation and fulfilling the needs of humanity are the guiding principles. It is a vision that satisfies the deepest yearnings of the people for peace. Society can now create the abundance the new technology promises, and so a new world: a cooperative society, with this abundance distributed according to need.

In spite of worsening economic conditions, nothing can be accomplished until the American people hold a vision of where they want to go and what they want to be. Creating and imbuing them with such vision is the overriding task of revolutionaries and the foundation of our organization.

Join us!

For more information or a free information packet, email LRNA at info@lrna.org, or call 773-486-0028, or write LRNA, P.O. Box 477113, Chicago, IL 60647. "Sign up and stay informed" at <http://rallycomrades.lrna.org/contact-us>

China's Rise and the Historical Decline of the U.S.

The United States share of the global gross domestic product has been in constant decline over the past 75 years. The U.S. accounted for roughly 50 percent of global output at the end of World War II. By 1985, its share stood at 22.5 percent. It has fallen to 15.1 percent today, and the International Monetary Fund projects that it will slip to 13.7 percent by 2023. In this context we see fundamental challenges being made to the existing world order. As the U.S. loses its economic dominance, it increases its war footing. This reality underlies what has been called the “pivot” by the U.S. to the East. The encirclement and confrontation with China and Russia are the primary focus of U.S. military strategy.

CHINA

China is connecting with the world, pursuing multilateral agreements around the globe and creating a parallel world order. It is doing this through relationships such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership and the Belt and Road Initiative. In recent years, these global institutions have made trillions of dollars in trade and infrastructure development agreements throughout Asia, Africa, Europe, the Middle East, and Latin America. A review of these relationships shows the breadth of the relationships, networks and alliances the Chinese are building throughout the world.

China is the world's biggest crude oil importer, buying nine billion barrels of oil a day. In March of 2018, the Shanghai International Energy Exchange launched the first crude futures contracts priced in Chinese yuan. Crude oil is the world's most-traded commodity. For decades, the U.S. dollar has been the primary currency (known as petrodollars) for oil futures contracts. China is moving to have its new petroyuan play a more significant role in

global oil trading.

The decision by the U.S. to withdraw from the Iran nuclear deal and impose sanctions against Iran aims to limit global trade of Iran's crude oil. China is the largest importer of Iranian oil and India is the second largest. Regardless of U.S. sanctions, major Asian oil importers like China and India will continue to buy Iranian oil. The long-term effect of this will be that the dollar's international position will be weakened by the increased use of China's currency in global financial trading as part of the general trend of these countries to get out from under the domination of the dollar.

The policies of the Trump Administration are an expression of the underlying process of polarization, not the cause. Certainly, the character of the Trump Administration is contributing to the polarization going on in the world today and influences the ways that the struggle is being shaped and carried out. There are forces within the Trump Administration that are now in a position to, according to what they believe, shape and advance the merger of the State and the corporations: that is, a fascist economy and society that began decades ago through previous Democratic and Republican administrations.

Their views and policies are a means of carrying out the common interests of the ruling class in the midst of the destruction of capitalism. However, while there is no fundamental difference over *what* those interests are there are bitter and dangerous battles over *how* these interests will be advanced.

The U.S., and indeed the world's ruling class, cannot be constrained by the old alliances and obligations, or the ideas, institutions, and approaches of another era. The destruction of value, the end of the capitalist system, and the necessity to create something new are shaping the internal contradictions within the ruling class. And they are driving

the growing antagonism between the developing global ruling class and the developing world proletariat. If the capitalists have to change the form to maintain a system of private property, they have proven they will do that. They are doing that now. In the process of the fight among themselves and against the world's proletariat, they are evolving step by step, and sometimes against their own will, a new world order: a new system based on private property.

STRUGGLE IN THE WAKE OF TARIFFS

The economic warfare of tariffs and unilateral sanctions are currently central to the efforts by the U.S. in its fight to maintain its hegemony. Yet, even as these measures are applied, and the conflict and instability in the world deepens, the U.S. State dictates to corporations and countries alike. They interfere with the economies and internal politics of the countries they target, generating opposition and polarization throughout the world, as in the current cases of Iran and Venezuela. But less discussed is the fact that they attempt to dictate to corporations how, where and to whom they will produce for and sell to. This is why some transnational corporations have opposed tariffs and sanctions because they interfere with the free flow of capital and open access to the markets that they need.

Corporations pursue the bottom line no matter where they are headquartered and pressure sovereign governments to do the same. The U.S., with its dominance over the financial system, coupled with its military might, is a formidable adversary.

NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY

The rise of Russia and China on the global stage has presented a challenge to the capitalists in the U.S. (and Europe) that has led the U.S. to devise ways to confront the threat

to its global hegemony over the years of these Democratic and Republican administrations. The wars in the Arab world are examples of how the U.S. has been dealing with the perceived threat to its hegemony. The 1991 attack on Iraq (Operation Desert Storm), the 2001 invasion of Afghanistan, the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq, followed by the war against terror in Syria and Iraq were orchestrated by the U.S. and its western and regional allies to encircle China and threaten Russia, in order to counter their influence in the Middle East. They were also intended to wipe out any resistance to U.S. hegemony from regional States and non-State actors. Those wars opened more floodgates of refugees to the European Union, especially when Turkey began to use the Syrian refugees as pawns to achieve Turkey's strategic goals.

The current NSS (National Security Strategy) document also singles out Russian and Chinese involvement in Latin America as a threat to US interests. The policy view that the U.S. has exclusive rights to Latin America goes back as far as the 1823 Monroe Doctrine.

The NSS specifically targets Venezuela and Cuba as “governments [which] cling to anachronistic leftist authoritarian models that continue to fail their people.” It accuses China of seeking to pull the region into its orbit, through its State-led investments and loans and accuses Russia of attempting to execute “its failed politics of the Cold War, by bolstering its radical Cuban allies, as Cuba continues to repress its citizens.”

The world order that has been in place since the fall of the Soviet Union, a unipolar, hegemonic order dominated by the U. S., is being challenged by the rising of a new, multipolar world order. The overriding quality of the process is deepening polarization and instability. Revolution is now an objective historic inevitability. **RC**

Opening the Door to Political Revolution (Continued from page 3)

fordable housing fund. But this is not working. The number of affordable units produced is not enough to meet the need, and in fact most “affordable” housing is not affordable to low-income people. Excess luxury housing also crowds out low-income housing from the available residential land. The massive public investment proposed by Sanders is to take \$2.5 trillion from the corporations and build ten million units of the low-income housing that people need, instead of begging for crumbs from profiteers.

ABOLISH SPECULATION IN REAL ESTATE

The role of revolutionaries in both the social and electoral movements is to continue, at every step, to expose the role of corporate property as the obstacle to meeting human needs. The people being thrown out of this economy need a new system. They cannot survive in this one. Modern automation and Artificial Intelligence are creat-

ing the material abundance necessary. But in order to access it, we have to build a cooperative economy, where housing, food, health care, and education are available to each according to their need, and from each according to their ability.

However, a cooperative economy cannot emerge spontaneously, and cannot be built one cooperative at a time, or one reform at a time. The corporations will never allow it. We wholeheartedly support the call for political revolution, but it is more than a slogan. It is a life and death political struggle to claw control of government away from the corporations, return their resources to the public, and establish a working-class economic and political democracy. The responsibility of revolutionaries is to fight for the vision, clarity of purpose, strategy, and organization necessary to make it happen.

It is not any material shortage or scarcity that creates

the deprivation we face today, but the private property system that blocks people from accessing the abundance that already exists.

In the progressive electoral campaigns of Sanders and others, revolutionaries fight for the programs and demands of the new class, and fearlessly confront the corporate property system whenever it gets in the way. Moms 4 Housing modeled this when they selected speculator property to take over. No one is talking about taking away anyone's home who needs it to live in, or any other personal property. The vulture capitalist Wedgewood had the gall to accuse the mothers of “stealing” because they moved into an empty home to save the lives of their children. The moms shot back that it is the corporations that hoard empty homes that are the real criminals. Although they temporarily lost in a court of law, they won in the court of public opinion, and that is the court that will determine our future. **RC**